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## AMALGAMATION OF RELATED TRADES IN AMERICAN UNIONS

While the radical industrial unionists, who favor combining all crafts skilled and unskilled in an industry, have been engaged in controversy with the conservative trade autonomists who oppose this policy, a gradual evolution has been taking place in consequence of which craft unions are disappearing. Of one hundred and thirty-three national unions, most of them affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, only twenty-eight may be called craft unions, if by a craft we mean work requiring identical skill and training. Nor do these figures tell the whole story, since about one half of the twenty-eight craft unions are coöperating through loose alliances with other related trades in the same industry. Yet the disappearance of the craft union does not necessarily prove the ultimate victory of the industrial union. Only five of the national unions claim jurisdiction over all trades in an industry. The remaining one hundred are of an intermediate type. They unite only part of the trades in an industry. We shall call them amalgamations of related trades.

The history of American unionism reveals, indeed, an occasional tendency towards disintegration of related trades. Between 1889 and 1902 the printing-pressmen, the bookbinders, the photo-engravers, and the stereotypers and electrotypers seceded, one after another, from the International Typographical Union and formed separate organizations. More recently the window-glass cutters and flatteners have broken away from the window-glass workers' union. But such instances of disintegration have been comparatively rare. Moreover, crafts which were once united, and later became disunited, as for example in the boot and shoe industry, have sometimes been brought together again. Much more frequent has been the amalgamation of related trades by the combination of existing unions, by the extension of the jurisdiction of a craft union to include unorganized crafts, or simply by the retention of membership in the original organization as the craft has split by division of labor into several crafts.

The amalgamation of related trades has been taking place in the United States almost ever since national unions began to appear. The machinists and blacksmiths, who were united in the same union as early as 1859, managed also to bring the boiler-makers into their

organization before it went to pieces in 1877. The Sons of Vulcan, composed of iron-boilers and puddlers, united in 1876 with the National Union of Iron and Steel Roll Hands and the Associated Brotherhood of Iron and Steel Heaters, Rollers, and Roughers of the United States.

The number of such amalgamations has increased greatly since 1894. As division of labor has become more minute, trade barriers have become less rigid, and differences of skill have been lessened. Hence the newly created crafts—if we can still so call them—have not only held together but have also affiliated themselves with other crafts in the same industry. Integration of industry has been another factor. Workers engaged in different parts of the industrial process have been brought together under a common management and have combined in order to coöperate for collective bargaining. Between 1894 and 1904 the various unions of boot and shoe-workers coalesced as did also those of the hatters and of the textile-workers; the union of furniture-workers combined with that of the machine woodworkers; the Iron Molders' Union absorbed the core-makers; and the union of coal-hoisting engineers was merged into the United Mine Workers. The period witnessed the rise of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen with its minutely subdivided groups of workers, skilled and unskilled, in the meat-packing houses. During this decade, also, the United Brewery Workmen, the United Mine Workers, and the Western Federation of Miners embarked on their policy of industrial unionism and attempted to bring into their organizations all kinds of workers in the industry.

During the ten years since 1904 the movement towards amalgamation of related trades has been accelerated by the rise of the Industrial Workers of the World. Both of the labor federations which bear this title<sup>1</sup> require that each national union affiliated with it shall embrace all workers in an industry. The growth of these two labor federations has undoubtedly stimulated the American Federation of Labor to pursue a more liberal attitude towards trade amalgamation and industrial unionism. The attitude of the dominant faction in the American Federation of Labor has, indeed, sometimes been misstated. The term "trade autonomists," which

<sup>1</sup> One of the associations known as the Industrial Workers of the World has headquarters in Chicago and the other has headquarters in Detroit. The latter broke away from the parent organization in 1908 to form a rival federation bearing the same name.

is applied to them, is also misleading. They oppose industrial unionism. But not even the most conservative of the older labor leaders who cling to the traditions and methods of the past would desire to rip apart the existing amalgamations of trades nor to forbid all fusion of craft unions in the future. They favor the amalgamation of closely related trades, but are inclined to broaden very slowly their interpretation of the words "closely related." They have been especially reluctant to encourage the absorption of unskilled workers by an organization of the skilled, or to sanction the distribution of a craft employed in several industries among a corresponding number of industrial unions.

In times past the American Federation of Labor has been opposed to certain alliances of related trades, notably the International Building Trades Council. It opposed the latter organization, not because it objected to such coöperation between related trades, but because the International Building Trades Council refused to affiliate with it and yet was settling jurisdictional disputes in the building trades, maintaining sympathetic strikes, and fulfilling other functions which were being performed, in part at least, by the American Federation of Labor. The president of the American Federation of Labor made a sweeping assertion at the convention in 1901 regarding this conflict of function. "There is nothing," he said, "for which the International Building Trades Council can declare which has not been more effectually exercised and more clearly achieved by the American Federation of Labor." Such a statement is an exaggeration, since the group of related trades has interests in common which a general labor federation will not promote. Nevertheless, the allegiance of some of the national unions of the building trades was very probably weakened by their greater interest in the independent federation of the trades in their own industry. The American Federation of Labor contented itself at first merely with opposition. A more constructive policy was inaugurated in 1903 when the Metal Trades Federation, composed of machinists, blacksmiths, pattern-makers, iron-molders, and other metal trades, was made a department of the American Federation of Labor. Subsequently, a building trades department, a mining department, and a department of railway employees were created. Only the railway shop crafts are at present united in the railway employees department, but the ultimate purpose is to combine all railway employees.

Recently, the party in control of the American Federation of

Labor has shown a tendency to pursue a more liberal policy regarding the organization of the unskilled. This is illustrated by the efforts to form unions of migratory and other unskilled workers and by the sanction given in 1912 to the plan of the shingle weavers to include all workers, skilled and unskilled, in the lumber industry.

The majority in the American Federation of Labor are still opposed to industrial unionism. For some time, however, there has been a steadily increasing minority desiring industrial unionism, and at recent conventions of the general labor federation they have maintained a strong though unsuccessful fight for the adoption of resolutions favoring that method of organization.

Should the amalgamation of related trades include all or only a part of the crafts in an industry? Should the government by which such related trades are united be a centralized amalgamation practically identical with that of the national craft unions which it replaces, or should it be a loose alliance or federation in which the national craft unions continue to retain their existence? To answer these questions we must consider first, the reasons for uniting related trades; secondly, the relative advantages and disadvantages of centralized amalgamations and loose confederations; and, thirdly, the kinds of related trades which have tended to unite.

An important reason for uniting a group of related crafts has been the need of coöperating to maintain strikes against a common employer. Strikes are much more effectual if all wage-earners in industrial establishments, including many not affected by the dispute, may be ordered to quit work simultaneously. When the great strike in the meat-packing houses of Chicago was declared in the summer of 1904, the stationary engineers and stationary firemen, who have separate organizations from the other employees, remained at work. Had they quit, the strike would not have failed, say the leaders of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen. With a large supply of meat in the refrigerators to satisfy current demands, the packers could view with equanimity the prospect of a cessation of work for many days. But if the stationary engineers and the stationary firemen had struck and so closed down the ice plant in the refrigerating department, they would have had to make terms within a few hours. The engineers and firemen did apply to their organizations for consent to strike in sympathy with the butchers, but some days elapsed before permission could be obtained. When they did finally strike, the pack-

ers, anticipating such a movement, had already secured engineers and firemen to take their places.

Again, strikes of employees in a single department of a factory often fail because the employees in other departments can be kept busy by having the work of the strikers done in some other establishment. For example, if the compositors in a printing office declare a strike, but the printing-pressmen remain at work, the publisher may have his composition done by non-union workers in some other office, the forms or stereotyped plates being handled by his own pressmen. Employers united in opposition to the union frequently put themselves to considerable inconvenience to help one another in an emergency. It was the desire to put an end to such practices on the part of employers which led to the amalgamation of three national unions of iron and steel-workers in 1876. When the iron-boilers and puddlers went on strike, the heaters and rollers were kept at work by supplying them with muck iron made by non-unionists in other places. For this reason the great Pittsburgh strike of boilers and puddlers failed in 1875; and, because of its failure, this group of workers, highly skilled, strongly unionized, and withal much inclined to hold aloof "from entangling alliances," was converted to the plan of amalgamating all trades in the iron and steel mills into one union.<sup>2</sup>

Without coöperation between the related crafts in an industry strikes of a single trade fail because, in order to keep the plant in operation and thus remain employed, the members of other trades do the work of the strikers or instruct non-unionists how to do it. Thus, in times past, locomotive firemen have run engines during strikes of locomotive engineers; and locomotive engineers, on their part, have taught strike-breakers how to perform the duties of locomotive firemen. Undoubtedly, unions would be able to bargain much more effectively for better working conditions if the agreements or contracts of all trades in an establishment expired at the same time, if the demands of the several trades were presented jointly to an employer, and if a refusal to comply with these demands caused every employee in the establishment to quit work.

On the other hand, strikes of a single trade which can not be readily replaced are unfair to the other related trades in the industry, since such a single trade, even though composed of only a handful of journeymen, can often shut down a large plant and throw out of employment hundreds of workmen who have no voice

<sup>2</sup> *National Labor Tribune*, Pittsburgh, January 2, 9, April 10, 1875.

in the matter. One reason why the International Typographical Union wishes to retain control over the machinists in the printing office is because a strike on their part may abruptly halt all activities and throw the other workers out of employment.

Strikes of a single trade are unfair to the group which wages them, when other workers in the factory who have not helped to win the strike must share the fruits of victory. If a group whose presence is necessary for the running of a factory labors only eight hours a day, the other employees must also suspend work at the end of the eighth hour. In consequence, when the trades in an industry are organized into separate unions, one of them may bear the brunt of a long and severe struggle to secure improvements which will also benefit the others.

A group of trades which jointly produce a single article benefit greatly by uniting to boycott "unfair" firms and to extend, by means of the union label, the sale of goods made in "fair" shops. Attempts of each trade to maintain independent boycotts cause much confusion. Thus, the printing-pressmen may be urging the public not to buy the newspaper of a publisher, while the printers, to whom the same publisher has accorded excellent conditions, may be urging the public to buy it. One reason why the brewery workmen became enthusiastic advocates of the so-called "industrial union" was because of the conflict in maintaining boycotts which occurred when the various trades were organized into separate associations. Similarly, when each trade in an industry has a separate label, conflict is inevitable. Thus, if one of the trades in a particular factory is organized and the others are not, the union of the unorganized trade will object to the efforts of the organized union to extend the sale of the goods made in that factory by means of the union label. The various organizations of boot and shoe-workers amalgamated in 1895 because of the great need of co-operating to maintain a single label.<sup>3</sup> After four trades in the printing industry had split off from the International Typographical Union, local alliances of the printing trades in each community became necessary, primarily to promote harmony in the use of the union label.

Another reason for amalgamation and federation of related trades is the movement of workers from one craft or division of a craft to another. Instances of crafts whose members are recruited from other trades are numerous. The ranks of the locomotive en-

<sup>3</sup> *The Laster*, Lynn, June 15, 1891, p. 2.

gineers are replenished from the locomotive firemen. A railroad brakeman may become later a railroad conductor. The pressman's assistant rises to the position of printing-pressman. The cigar-maker of ability learns enough concerning the varieties of tobacco and the making of the cigar to do the work of the cigar-packer. Many carpenters and cabinet-makers enter the craft of pattern-making. In the large meat-packing houses, in the coal mines, in boot and shoe factories,<sup>4</sup> and in other industries, division of labor is lessening the amount of skill required, and journeymen pass readily from one kind of work to another. Under such conditions the various groups of workers must combine to control the supply of the labor in the industry and to prevent disastrous competition for employment between members of different unions. The combination of related trades solves also the difficulty created by the refusal of journeymen who change their trade to sever their connection with the union of their former craft in order not to lose the right to its sick, death, and other benefits. Thus, many locomotive firemen after becoming locomotive engineers retain their membership in the union of the locomotive firemen. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers pays benefits of adequate amount, but the average age of its members is higher than the average for the union of locomotive firemen, most of whose members are young men. Hence the death and disability rate of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers is larger and the cost of maintaining its benefits is greater. Because of this additional cost, young locomotive firemen who have received their promotion are reluctant to join it. When railway conductors become too old to perform their responsible duties efficiently they are often employed by the railroad company as switchmen. These men are frequently too old to become beneficiary members of the Switchmen's Union and they insist on retaining their membership in the Order of Railway Conductors. Of course, when part of the members of a trade belong to one organization and part to another, their ability to bargain effectively with employers is greatly lessened.

Another advantage of amalgamation and federation of related trades is that it reduces the number of jurisdictional disputes con-

<sup>4</sup> The Boot and Shoe Workers' Union adopted the following in 1904: "Members working at one branch of the trade are entitled to change to another branch, provided the local union having jurisdiction over that branch cannot fill the position with one of its members." *Shoe Workers' Journal*, Boston, February, 1904, p. 37.



cerning the right to do certain work. To be sure, trade amalgamation has caused many jurisdictional disputes as to membership, since many of the old-craft unions have waged a bitter conflict against the new industrial organizations which have attempted to absorb them. But such disputes over membership must be distinguished clearly from disputes over work which arise because of the difficulty of making clear-cut divisions of labor between the various trades which coöperate in production. Thus, not only do the masons lay granite and other kinds of stone, but sometimes they also cut them. The granite-cutters not only cut granite but sometimes they also lay it. In a small town the same man often combines the trades of bricklayer, mason, and plasterer, or those of plumber, steam-fitter, and gas-fitter. Even in large cities the bricklayer or the plumber may do the work of related trades when he can not find employment in his own. The brewer and the brewery driver must handle cooper's tools in an emergency, and the cooper in the small establishment does the work of the brewer when there is not sufficient cooperage to keep him busy. In the small retail store, clerks drive wagons and go out for orders when occasion demands. On the other hand, many a driver fills at the store the orders which he has taken during the morning and then delivers the goods to customers. Such men frequently receive a higher wage than either the driver or the ordinary clerk. The introduction of machinery, the use of new materials and new divisions of labor are upsetting carefully established trade boundaries and are giving opportunity for a plentiful supply of jurisdictional disputes. The increasing use of cement has created a new group of journeymen, the cement-workers, who are waging a war of words with the bricklayers about the right to lay artificial stone made of cement. Another comparatively new group, the ceramic, mosaic and encaustic tile-layers, are engaged in a controversy with the bricklayers as to which of them shall lay tile. The bricklayers, the tile-layers, and the cement-workers all claim the right to lay tile made of cement. Instances might be multiplied.

When two related trades are organized into separate unions, each demands a careful demarcation of its work and a strict observance of the boundaries thus set. Such a rigid division causes great inconvenience both to employer and employee and in many instances is impracticable. If after long negotiation a satisfactory dividing line is fixed, the adoption of new methods of production is apt soon to upset the arrangement. The result is an endless con-

troversy with all the disastrous consequences which follow in the trail of such internal conflicts.

On the other hand, if both trades are united in the same union, one of them may often do the work of the other without causing a serious dispute. If a dispute does arise, it can be effectively settled when referred to a common organization whose decision is final for both parties. In England, where the stone-masons and the granite-cutters are federated in the same union, there exists no controversy between them as in the United States where they are divided into separate organizations. To be sure, disputes do exist between American bricklayers and masons who are united in the Bricklayers' and Masons' International Union, but in places where such disputes have arisen, harmony has usually been restored by the committee on general good, which federates all local societies of the two trades throughout the community. If this committee can not settle the controversy it is referred to the international union, "which administers justice," says an official of the society, "and prevents another Cain and Abel episode." Jurisdictional disputes have been serious blots in the history of many American trade unions, and an important argument in favor of trade amalgamations is the possibility that they will prevent one large class of such disputes.

An objection to trade amalgamations is that, while related crafts have many interests in common, they have other interests which may diverge widely or may directly conflict. The difficulty of harmonizing these diverging or conflicting interests is increased when one trade outnumbers all the others added together, since the group having the majority is apt to use the amalgamation to further its own concerns at the expense of the others. Thus, in the United Association of Journeymen Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters, and Steam Fitters' Helpers, the gas-fitters and steam-fitters, who are outnumbered by the plumbers, complain that often they are not given opportunity at local and national meetings to discuss matters affecting their own trades and that when given an opportunity they are outvoted by the plumbers. They declare that most of the funds are expended in behalf of the plumbers, and that most of the legislation adopted is favorable to that trade. The stone-masons make a similar complaint against the bricklayers. The printing-pressmen and members of other trades in the printing industry affirm that they seceded from the International Typographical Union because the compositors who preponderated greatly in

numbers gave too little attention to the interests of the other crafts.

This weakness of the trade amalgamation has arisen largely from the failure to provide in its form of government for the fact that it is a federation of distinct groups. The transition from craft unions to trade amalgamations has, frequently, been so gradual that workmen have not been acutely conscious of the need for changing the structure of their organizations. Usually, the constitution of the old-craft union has been taken over bodily, often without amendment, by the new amalgamation. In most organizations the national officers have, sooner or later, been given authority to organize each trade or division of a trade in a community into a separate local union, whenever conditions warrant; but desiring to secure the economies of the large local union, they have been slow to exercise this discretionary power. Frequently, also, each trade is given carefully weighted representation on executive boards, conference boards, and other governmental bodies. Undoubtedly, harmony between the related trades may be greatly promoted by such provisions; but, when identity of interest is slight and divergence or conflict of interest is great, some loose form of federation or alliance may be desirable.

Temporary alliances and loose federations of unions of related trades are by no means uncommon. Indeed, there are to be found all degrees of centralization from temporary coöperation for some specific purpose to complete amalgamation. Temporary coöperation usually takes the form of a sympathetic strike. Very probably there is no agreement to help one another. Simply, the union of one trade on becoming involved in a dispute with employers calls for aid from other workers in the industry, and the latter responds by agreeing to engage in the conflict. A more advanced stage in coöperation is reached when there is a definite permanent agreement to help one another. An example of such an agreement is that between the wall-paper machine printers and color-mixers and the print-cutters who make wall-paper prints. By the terms of this agreement the printers and color-mixers promise not to use prints made by non-union print-cutters, and the print-cutters promise not to work for jobbers supplying wall-paper manufacturers whom the printers and color-mixers have declared to be unfair.

Such promises of two organizations to aid one another are unsatisfactory, however, if governmental machinery is not established for the purpose of making joint decisions and taking joint action

concerning matters affected by the terms of the agreement; and this is particularly the case if the agreement provides for coöperation by means of sympathetic strikes. In the first place, unless there is a joint tribunal to decide as to the expediency of engaging in the conflict by one of the affiliated crafts, sympathetic strikes are usually ineffective. When the union of one trade notifies the other only after the struggle has begun, there is often a long delay while the request to strike in sympathy is being considered by the national officers or perhaps by each local society of the related craft. Frequently, indeed, a strike of one union is practically lost or won before the members of another union decide to quit work.

A second result of the lack of coöperation during the preliminary stages of a dispute is that it deprives one union of the opportunity to prevent inexpedient or unwise strikes desired by another. When the strike has already begun, and when the refusal to help means its failure, a strong sense of obligation may force the members of a related trade against their will to engage in the struggle.

A third objection is that unless the related trades bargain jointly with employers and make joint agreements, the policy of waging sympathetic strikes increases the number involved in each conflict without reducing the number of such conflicts. For example, the carpenters engaged in the construction of a building declare a strike for higher wages, and the members of every other trade on the building quit work in sympathy. When this trouble has been adjusted, the plumbers discover that the employer has violated his agreement with them; and all trades again go on strike. Next, the elevator constructors and the hoisting engineers quarrel as to which of them shall run the completed elevator. The other trades take sides and all building operations are suspended until the dispute can be settled. Then the business agent of the plasterers' union finds that his trade has a grievance and orders every one to leave the building. This is not a very exaggerated picture of conditions in the building industry as they existed in Chicago just before 1900 or in New York during the spring and summer of 1902. Building operations were seriously demoralized. The time for the ultimate completion of a building was a matter of gamble with all odds in favor of delay. Building contractors, landlords, and the general public joined in a chorus of protest against the arbitrary methods of the unions.

A fourth result is to place the unions in the position of breaking their contracts. Perhaps an employer has granted favorable terms

to a union which agrees on its part to maintain industrial peace for one or more years. Then this union becomes involved in a sympathetic strike to help another trade and violates its agreement. To aggravate the offense in the eyes of the public and the employer, the members of the union meddle in a dispute which is apparently none of their concern.

Coöperation between unions of related trades reaches a much higher stage of efficiency when governmental machinery is provided to carry out the terms of the agreement. Sometimes the existing officials of the contracting unions are utilized for this purpose, as for example in the "tripartite agreement" for the regulation of sympathetic strikes by the unions of printers, pressmen, and bookbinders in 1896. By the terms of this agreement, the presidents of the three international unions visited in person the place where a joint strike was demanded or sent a representative to effect a settlement if possible. When the dispute could not be amicably settled, each president referred the matter to the executive board of his own association. The three executive boards were equal in size, and a majority of the three taken together could declare a joint strike. Sometimes special governmental machinery is created to carry out the terms of the agreement between two or more unions. Thus, the wall-paper machine printer and color-mixers and the print-cutters, have created a joint national committee to control joint strikes and joint agreements in every establishment where the wall-paper manufacturer makes his own prints—in other words, where the two trades have a common employer.

Even greater unity between the related trades is attained when a permanent federal government is created, not to perform some particular function specifically provided for in the written agreement but to perform any function which the unions represented in the federation may jointly decide, from time to time, to be desirable. Federations of related trades are either local, national, or international, the so-called international unions having branches in Canada. Local federations were formed before national or international ones. Thus, while the International Building Trades Council was created only in 1897, local federations of building trades existed as early as 1882 or 1883 in New York, Chicago, Baltimore, Cincinnati, and other large cities.<sup>5</sup> Movement of workers from one city to another, competition between employers in different places, and other causes which brought about the com-

<sup>5</sup> *The Carpenter*, New York, May, 1882, June and August, 1883.

bination of local into national craft unions have likewise operated to superimpose national upon local federations of related trades.

National federations of related trades have been either combinations of national craft unions or combinations of both local allied trades councils and national craft unions. In the second instance, either of the two kinds of constituent bodies may predominate according to the method of representation at the convention of the national federation. Thus, at conventions of the International Building Trades Council, the local councils of allied trades outvoted the national trade unions until 1905, because each one of the two kinds of organizations was allowed the same vote. On the other hand, at conventions of the National Metal Trades Federation the national craft unions, whose voting power varied according to membership, preponderated over the local councils of related trades, each of which had only one vote. The national trade unions claim that when outvoted in federations of related trades their power over subordinate societies is greatly weakened. Prominent officials of the carpenters, bricklayers, granite-cutters, plumbers, and other building trades opposed the International Building Trades Council for this reason. Not all of the national trade unions in the building industry were affiliated at the time with the International Building Trades Council, but the local allied trades councils would still have predominated even if all of them had been represented. The national craft unions in the building industry have always been decentralized, and the ability of their central governments to control subordinate societies was still further lessened when these subordinate branches relied no longer on the central government for financial and moral support in time of strikes, but secured whatever aid they needed from local and national building trades councils. To check this tendency towards decentralization, those opposed to the International Building Trades Council organized in 1904 the Structural Building Trades Alliance, composed only of national trade unions. Local allied trades councils were not permitted representation at its conventions. In 1905, too late to prevent the successful launching of the rival federation, the International Building Trades Council modified its policy by granting to the national craft unions a voting power proportionate to membership, while continuing to allow each local allied trades council only one vote. At present, the federation of related trades, dominated by local allied trade councils, is discredited. Such local councils may

be given representation at the federal convention, but the national craft unions retain the controlling vote.

The amalgamation is the most centralized form of combination between related crafts; but, like the national trade union, it is a federation of local craft organizations, and, as already pointed out, its machinery of government is in most respects the same as that of the national trade union.

The degree of centralization desirable for combinations of related trades depends on the number of interests which they have in common and the number which conflict. The administration of their common interests grows more efficient as they become more centralized; but the opportunity for friction regarding matters of conflicting interest increases also. Thus, the government of the amalgamation is more efficient than the federation of local allied trades councils or of national craft unions. It has direct control over the local craft unions and thus can compel more prompt and faithful compliance with its commands than can the federation, which must issue orders through intermediate organizations. On the other hand, friction is more likely to arise because matters concerning one craft alone are not left to the organization of that particular craft but are considered by a joint convention or joint executive board on which all the related crafts are represented.

Before determining the kinds of related trades which should be federated or amalgamated, let us first consider the kinds which are at present actually united. Amalgamations and federations of related trades may be divided broadly into (1) those combining trades working for the same employers and (2) those combining trades working usually for different employers. Illustrations of the first are the union of employees in carriage and wagon factories, the union of employees in cigar factories, and the many other trade amalgamations whose members work together in the same industrial establishments. An example of the second would be an organization uniting the makers of hand-saws with the carpenters who use them. These two trades never have the same employers, yet the possibility of combining them has been considered.

Combinations of trades working for the same employers may be subdivided as follows:

a) Industrial unions claiming jurisdiction over every group of workers in an industry, including the unskilled and certain well-defined auxiliary trades, such as the stationary engineers, the stationary firemen, and the teamsters, who are found in many other

industries. The number of industrial unions is small. A few have recently been formed as departments of the Industrial Workers of the World. The most important of the older ones are the United Brewery Workmen, the Western Federation of Miners, the United Mine Workers, and the Quarry Workers' International Union.

b) Unions which include only part of the related trades in an industry. To this group belong most of the American unions. Auxiliary crafts found in other industries are admitted by a few of these organizations. Thus, the International Typographical Union, which embraces compositors, proof-readers, and mailers, is engaged in controversy with the International Association of Machinists concerning jurisdiction over the linotype machinists. The theatrical stage employees dispute the claim of the union of carpenters and joiners to control the stage carpenters and the claim of the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers to control the stage electricians. As a rule, however, auxiliary crafts are excluded and so are, usually, the unskilled workers. Some of the unions in this group unite only a very small proportion of the crafts in an industry. In such instances, the trades combined are usually more closely related than the others. Thus, while the various crafts in the railway industry have always been disunited, certain ones which are closely associated in the operation of trains are organized in the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen. Similarly, while most of the trades in the printing industry are organized separately, the several groups of workers engaged in bookbinding are united in a single union, and so are also the stereotypers and electrotypers. On the other hand, some organizations in this group have acquired jurisdiction over nearly all the trades in an industry. Thus, the International Seamen's Union controls all seamen except the highly skilled marine engineers, mates, and pilots, who have refused to affiliate with their less skilled fellow craftsmen. Some organizations, such as the Molders' Union, claim jurisdiction over all except the auxiliary trades and the unskilled workers. Others include the unskilled but not the auxiliary trades. Thus, the Cigar Makers' International Union admits workers of all degrees of skill from the person who selects the leaves of the tobacco to the one who packs the finished cigars in boxes. The boast of the officials of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America is that their organization makes no distinction as to skill. The expert who strips the hide from the carcass of the steer and the common laborer who pushes a truck are both welcome as members.



But, in order to escape jurisdictional disputes with other organizations, both of these unions refuse to admit auxiliary trades.

The second broad division of trade amalgamations, namely, combinations of crafts working for different employers, contains only a few organizations. These unite chiefly trades producing certain materials and tools with trades using them. A good example is the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners which includes not only the carpenters and joiners employed on buildings in process of construction but also the machine woodworkers employed in mills where sash, doors, window frames, and other woodwork handled by the carpenters are manufactured. Another example was the now defunct American Railway Union, which included not only those engaged in railway transportation but also the car-builders. The great Chicago strike of 1894, which caused the destruction of this union, was waged to secure better conditions of employment for those engaged in building Pullman parlor cars.

Trades producing materials and tools have few interests in common with those using them. The two groups may, indeed, aid one another by means of sympathetic strikes. Thus, the carpenters may aid the machine woodworkers by refusing to use sash, window-frames or doors manufactured by non-unionists. The wall-paper machine printers and color-mixers may aid the print-cutters by refusing to use prints cut by unorganized labor. The bricklayers may aid the brick, tile, and terra cotta workers by refusing to lay brick made by non-union workers. But coöperation by means of sympathetic strikes is the only way by which such widely separated trades may help one another, and the expediency of even this form of coöperation seems doubtful. In the first place, the hostility to the strike declared in 1894 by the railway transportation workers in favor of the Pullman car builders indicated that strikes in behalf of such remotely related trades are held in much disfavor by the public even when, as in the above instance, all parties were united in the same organization. Moreover, the employers consider that they have been treated very unfairly when their employees, to whom they have granted favorable terms, strike in behalf of a trade with which neither party has any personal relations. Combination between such remotely related trades seems undesirable. If they do attempt to combine, federation or merely a written agreement would be preferable.

A small group of unions, some of which unite trades never having the same employer, are those attempting to combine all work-

ers making goods from the same material. Frequently, the manufacturers of one article do not produce other articles from the same material. Their employees compose entirely separate trades, and are never associated in the same industrial establishment with the workers on the other articles. An example was the Amalgamated Rubber Workers' Union which was composed of workers on all kinds of rubber goods, such as parts for mechanical appliances, bicycle tires, automobile tires, and rubber shoes. The men who make rubber tires for bicycles and automobiles possess no special facility for making rubber overshoes; nor do employers who manufacture rubber overshoes ever manufacture rubber goods for mechanical appliances. In fact, there is a territorial division of production. Rubber overshoes are produced largely in New England and rubber goods for mechanical appliances in other parts of the country, particularly New Jersey. The Amalgamated Rubber Workers' Union was, therefore, an unnatural combination of groups of workers having no interest in common. Its membership, indeed, was always small, and it soon went to pieces. Another example is, perhaps, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, which absorbed quite recently the machine woodworkers and furniture-workers, and is planning soon to include also the box-makers and wooden ship builders, and which hopes some day to have jurisdiction over all woodworkers in North America. Some of the trades which the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners seeks thus to unite possess few interests in common, and there is grave doubt whether real unity could ever be secured by such a wide-reaching organization.

The first essential for a successful combination of related trades is, therefore, that such trades have the same employers. If, in addition, such a combination admits neither auxiliary trades nor unskilled workers, its desirability will not be questioned by trade union leaders. In fact, the only debatable question is whether such an organization should be a federation of national craft unions or an amalgamation of local craft unions. If, as in the printing industry, the lines of demarcation between the trades are rigidly fixed; and, if, because one trade outnumbers the others, an amalgamation may disintegrate, as did the International Typographical Union; and if a satisfactory balance of power can not be secured by carefully weighted representation in conventions and on general executive boards—a federation may be preferable. If, as in the building industry or the railway industry, the related crafts

have been long and successfully organized into separate national trade unions, there will be much objection to the dismemberment of these associations; and the first successful attempt at combination will probably be a loose federation. If none of a group of related crafts outnumbers greatly the others, and if the divisions between trades are not rigidly fixed, so that laborers pass readily from one kind of work to another, the successful establishment of an amalgamation may be an easy task.

Two matters of long and bitter controversy that have arisen concerning combinations of trades working for the same employers have related (a) to the admission of auxiliary trades found in a number of industries and (b) to the admission of unskilled laborers. We shall first consider the method of organizing auxiliary trades. The industrial unionists favor their distribution among several industrial unions. The trade autonomists favor their combination into a single craft union. In behalf of the policy of distributing the members of an auxiliary trade among several industrial unions, it may be argued that such a craft gains much from its ability to coöperate for purposes of collective bargaining with other employees in the same establishment. Trades like the pattern-makers, the stationary engineers and the stationary firemen are especially handicapped unless the related trades aid them by declaring strikes in sympathy, for the reason that there are usually so few of these workers in each establishment that the employer can readily find sufficient non-unionists to take their places. On the other hand, coöperation for purposes of collective bargaining between members of an auxiliary craft in different industries is unnecessary. It is not even needed to maintain uniformity of wages, since such uniformity is required only between competing establishments in the same industry. In favor of combining the members of an auxiliary trade into one craft union, it may be argued that the supply of workers in a trade can be effectually regulated only when its members are so united. If distributed among several industrial unions, limitation of apprenticeship is impracticable, and there is no way of preventing the members in one industry from taking the places of fellow-craftsmen in other industries by acting as strike-breakers or by offering to work for lower wages. At the same time, the free movement of the members of the trade from one industry to another is checked by the erection of artificial barriers.

Those members of an auxiliary trade who have had to undergo additional training in order to do the work in a particular indus-

try are affected very indirectly by the total supply of workers in the craft and hence may amalgamate very profitably with other employees in the same industry. The Carriage and Wagon Workers' International Union claims that the carriage blacksmiths are specialists and hence can gain nothing from affiliation with the union of blacksmiths. The cutting die and cutter makers, who manufacture the dies used in cutting cloth, paper, leather, and other materials according to various patterns, declare that they have no interests in common with the blacksmiths and machinists, from whom their ranks are recruited. Special training is required to do this work; and, as the waste of material makes the cost of teaching new hands very high, the cutting die and cutter makers are only slightly affected by the demand for machinists and blacksmiths.

When the members of a trade require no special training for the work in each of the industries in which they are employed, a compromise seems necessary. Trade union officials have suggested that the members of such a trade might belong both to the craft union and to one of several industrial unions. Power to declare strikes and to bargain with employers could be vested in the industrial unions. The craft union could limit the supply of workers in trade and prevent individual competition for employment between them; and, if the scope of its activities were limited to these matters, there need be no overlapping of functions between it and the industrial unions.

The second question to be considered is whether the skilled and unskilled workers in an industry should be combined in the same organization. Undoubtedly the unskilled gain greatly from such an alliance. Organizations composed wholly of unskilled workers, such as the International Brotherhood of Foundry Employees, the International Association of Glass House Employees, the International Hod Carriers' and Building Laborers' Union, and the International Association of Blast Furnace Workers and Smelters are practically impotent to improve the conditions of their members. Since their work requires little or no training, strikes are useless. From the large standing army of unemployed, men and women can readily be secured to take their places. The International Hod Carriers' and Building Laborers' Union makes no mention of strikes in its constitution. In fact, the international organization pays no strike benefits and rarely declares a strike. The local societies of building laborers have derived the strength to maintain strikes and

otherwise bargain with employers from the aid which they have secured from the skilled trades by affiliation with local building trades councils. The Laborers' Union Protective Society of New York City, composed of bricklayers' and masons' helpers, has secured favorable conditions of employment for its members only through the help of the New York local unions of bricklayers which have declared strikes in their behalf and have secured the inclusion of provisions favorable to the helpers in their agreements with the contractors.

The formation of a vast organization of unskilled workers in all industries has been suggested by trade union officials. The Laborers' International Protective Union with jurisdiction over all unskilled and general laborers, male and female, was formed several years ago but never attained any real importance. The constant tide of immigration into the United States makes any effective regulation of the supply of general laborers impracticable. Moreover, unskilled workers can be kept faithful to the union only with great difficulty. During unemployment, which is very frequent among them, they are expelled for failure to pay dues, for acting as strike-breakers or for selling their labor at less than the union scale of wages. Those advocating one large organization of unskilled workers suggest the payment of sick and out-of-work benefits to prevent the members from breaking away from the union when in economic distress. But the ability of these workers with their low wages and frequent unemployment to maintain such benefits seems doubtful.

The chief hope of the unskilled workers rests in an alliance with the skilled, but the skilled gain nothing by such an alliance. On the contrary, such amalgamation entails a sacrifice since it imposes on the skilled the obligation of fighting battles in behalf of the unskilled. The keynote of the dominant unionism has been self-interest. The consistent pursuance of this policy by the American Federation of Labor and its constituent international unions has made them succeed where the Knights of Labor, with its altruistic ideals of brotherhood, failed. Following this policy, the skilled trades have refused to unite with the unskilled.

There are aristocracies even among the aristocrats. Certain trades whose members possess a higher degree of efficiency and training than do their fellow employees have refrained from entangling alliances. The exclusiveness of the locomotive engineers has undoubtedly helped to prevent the successful federation of all

railway employees. The bricklayers have held aloof from local and national federations of the building trades. The marine engineers have refused to affiliate with the International Seamen's Union. Years ago, the window-glass blowers and gatherers were reluctant to amalgamate with the less skilled window-glass cutters and flatteners. Today the situation is reversed. The introduction of machinery has greatly reduced the skill of the blowers and gatherers, and the cutters and flatteners who now possess the greater skill have seceded from the amalgamation of window-glass workers to form an independent organization. The lasters were for some years the aristocrats among the boot and shoe-workers. The introduction of machinery greatly reduced the skill of all boot and shoe-workers except the lasters. About 1885 the lasters formed a strong union while the other trades were unorganized or maintained weak struggling unions. In consequence, the lasters gained at the expense of the members of other crafts; for the employers, fearing to provoke them to resistance, permitted their wages to remain the same when reducing those of the other trades, and even secured reimbursement for increases in the wages of the lasters by imposing reductions on those of the other crafts. Similarly, the cotton mule spinners were able for many years to obtain high wages at the expense of the other unorganized groups of workers in the cotton industry.

Introduction of machinery and further division of labor have forced many of these highly skilled trades from their position of aloofness. With the replacement of the mule by the ring frame which can be manipulated by women and children, cotton mule spinning has become a vanishing craft. After 1890 the new lasting machinery greatly demoralized the lasters' unions. Certain processes could be done by boys, and one could pass fairly rapidly from the easy to the more difficult parts of the work. The lasters were, therefore, quite willing to join with the other trades in forming a single amalgamation of boot and shoe-workers in 1895.

This breaking down of the barriers between trades is bringing about, for the most part, however, only the amalgamation of groups whose work requires some degree of skill. The unskilled, who are most helpless, remain largely without effective organization. Nevertheless, as division of labor becomes more minute, as the old method of apprenticeship fails, and as the groups of skilled and semi-skilled are being recruited in an increasing number of instances by the promotion of the common laborers required for the many odd

jobs existing in every industrial establishment, the other trades are manifesting a growing tendency to admit such potentially dangerous competitors to their unions. Thus, the plumbers and the steam-fitters, the boiler-makers, the tile-layers, the blacksmiths, the pressmen, and some other trades admit their helpers to membership in their unions, because, while these helpers are not apprentices, they have opportunity to learn the trade and often become efficient journeymen. The Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America admits workers in the meat industry, irrespective of skill; and in 1904 all classes of employees in the Chicago packing houses went on strike to raise the wages of the least skilled and most poorly paid, the reason being that labor has been so minutely subdivided in the packing houses that the immigrant can be trained in a few months to even the most difficult of the processes. Some of those who are handling trucks and doing other odd jobs have been displaced from more skilled positions. They can slaughter and cut up the whole ox, hog, or sheep, and would be glad to regain their old positions at less wages than those now holding them are receiving. Moreover, the wages of all employees in the packing houses bear a fixed proportion to the amount paid to the least skilled. So the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen desires control over the general laborers, and declared the strike of 1904 in their favor to keep them satisfied with their present employment, and indirectly to raise the wages of the more skilled employees. Instances in which the self-interest of the skilled workers demand their amalgamation with the unskilled are still rare, however. If common laborers are admitted in the near future to unions of other workers in the same industry, they will be admitted, not from self-interest, but from more altruistic motives, from a growing spirit of class consciousness attended, perhaps, by a correspondingly growing realization of class responsibility.

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